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Your Reference: 11134P1 GB/KRG/EAD  
Application No: GB 0222359.2

28 February 2003

Dear Sirs

**Patents Act 1977:**  
**Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 and 18(3)**

Latest date for reply: 27 September 2004

I enclose two copies of my search and examination report and a copy of the citations.

By the above date you should either file amendments to meet the objections in the report or make observations on them. If you do not, the application may be refused.

#### Publication

I estimate that, provided you have met all formal requirements, preparations for publication of your application will be completed soon after 17 February 2004. You will then receive a letter informing you of completion and telling you the publication number and date of publication.

#### Amendment/withdrawal

If you wish to file amended claims for inclusion with the published application, or to withdraw the application to prevent publication, you must do so before the preparations for publication are completed. **No reminder will be issued.** If you write to the Office less than 3 weeks before the above completion date, please mark your letter prominently: **"URGENT - PUBLICATION IMMINENT"**.

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†Use of E-mail: Please note that e-mail should be used for correspondence only.




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Yours faithfully

  
Richard Gregson  
Examiner

**Important information about combined search and examination**

I also ask that you take note of the following points. These might have a bearing on the future stages of your application because the examination report has been sent to you before your application has been published.

- (a) You may file voluntary amendments before making a full response to my examination report. We will publish with your application any new or amended claims you file voluntarily or as a full response, provided that they are received before preparations for publication are completed. It would help us when you file amendments before publication if you could **prominently indicate** in a covering letter whether or not the amendments are intended as a full response to the examination report.
- (b) If you file a full response to the examination report before your application is published I will consider it as soon as possible. However, if this would disrupt the publication of your application, I would have to delay taking any action until the application had been published. This delay could be up to 3 months, depending upon when we receive your response.
- (c) There is another situation when there might be a delay between you filing a full response and the Patent Office responding to it. This would arise if you met all my objections but your application had not or had only recently been published. I could not report the outcome of my re-examination until I was satisfied that the search was complete for documents published before the priority date of your invention and that anybody interested in the application has had three months following publication of the application to make observations on the patentability of your invention.
- (d) Provided that the requirements of the Act have been met, I can send your application to grant as early as three months after publication. Before doing so I will bring the original search up to date and raise with you any further objection that might result from this top-up search. However, there is a possibility that at that time I may not have access to all the patent applications published after the priority date of your invention and of possible relevance to your application. If this is the case I would have to complete the search after grant and if necessary raise any new found novelty objection then.

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Application No: GB 0222359.2  
Claims searched: 1-20

Examiner: Richard Gregson  
Date of search: 27 February 2003

## Patents Act 1977 : Search Report under Section 17

### Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1-3, 5,6,9,10-18	WPI Abstract, Acc. No. 1996-512760 & JP 8266388 A (ASAHI) - see English language abstracts.
X	1,2,3,5, 10-18	WPI Abstract, Acc. No. 1999-281159 & JP 11089699 A (KURARAY) - see diagram and English language abstracts.
X	1,2,3, 10-18	WPI Abstract, Acc. No. 1998-406200 & JP 10165288 A (EBARA) - see diagram and English language abstracts.
X	1,2,3 10-18	WPI Abstract, Acc. No. 1996-203250 & JP 8070981 A (DAIWABO) - see diagram and English language abstracts.

### Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

### Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC<sup>V</sup>:

A4S : A5G

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC<sup>7</sup>:

A47G : A61L : B65D

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report :

EPODOC, WPI, JAPIO.

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## Patents Act 1977

### Combined Search and Examination Report under Sections 17 & 18(3)

#### Novelty

1. The invention as defined in claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9 and 18. is not new because it has already been disclosed in each of the following documents:
  - 1.1 WPI Abstract 1996-512760 for JP 8266388 A (Asahi) - see English language abstracts.
  - 1.2 WPI Abstract 1999-281159 for JP 11089699 A (Kuraray) - see diagram and English language abstracts.
  - 1.3 WPI Abstract 1998-406200 for JP 10165288 A (Ebara) - see diagram and English language abstracts.
  - 1.4 WPI Abstract 1996-203250 for JP 8070981 A (Daiwabo) - see diagram and English language abstracts.
2. Claim 1 claims a clothes cover comprising an odour absorbing sheet material fashioned into a garment receiving enclosure. All of the above documents disclose such a clothes cover with various means described for providing an odour absorbing function. The cover of document 1.2 comprises titanium dioxide as per claim 5 and is therefore considered to be odour absorbing although this is not explicitly disclosed. Claim 1 therefore lacks novelty over any of the above documents.
3. Claim 2 specifies that the cover is constructed from a non-woven fabric. This is disclosed in each of the above documents. Claim 3 specifies that the fabric is air permeable. This would seem to be an implied feature of all of the above documents as each is constructed from non-woven and each would seem to function in the same way as the present invention. Therefore claims 2 and 3 lack novelty over any of the above documents.
4. Claims 5 and 6 specify a number of different odour absorbents including titanium dioxide and particulate active carbon. These are disclosed in documents 1.2 and 1.1 respectively. Claim 9 specifies the use of a fixative to prevent shedding of odour absorbent from the sheet material. This is disclosed in document 1.1. Claims 5, 6 and 9 therefore lack novelty over the prior art.
5. Claim 18 is the equivalent method claim to claim 1. As claim 1 is considered to

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lack novelty over the prior art, so too is claim 18.

### Inventive step

6. The invention as defined in claims 4 and 10-17 is obvious in view of what has already been disclosed in the following documents:
- |     |   |   |  |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 1.1 | WPI Abstract 1996-512760 for<br>JP 8266388 A (Asahi)    | - | see English language abstracts.                |
| 1.2 | WPI Abstract 1999-281159 for<br>JP 11089699 A (Kuraray) | - | see diagram and English<br>language abstracts. |
| 1.3 | WPI Abstract 1998-406200 for<br>JP 10165288 A (Ebara)   | - | see diagram and English<br>language abstracts. |
| 1.4 | WPI Abstract 1996-203250 for<br>JP 8070981 A (Daiwabo)  | - | see diagram and English<br>language abstracts. |
7. Claim 4 specifies a number of materials for making the sheet material of claims 1-3. These are all conventional materials for making non-woven fabrics as per claims 2 and 3, and are therefore not considered to constitute an inventive feature. Claim 4 therefore lacks an inventive step over the prior art.
8. The features claimed in claims 10-17 appear to be conventional features of garment protecting bags. The skilled person reading any of the above references would realise that these features could be incorporated into the disclosed garment bags as a matter of course. Therefore claims 10-17 are not considered to be inventive over the prior art.

### Clarity.

9. Claims 7 and 8 are unclear in scope as they refer to features that are only preferred within the context of the claim.
10. If amendments are made to the claims in order to meet the above objections, corresponding amendments should be made to the description to ensure that it still supports the amended claims.

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